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THE APPEAL OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

TWO SPEECHES

BY

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

AND

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

AT THE MEETING OF THE

National Assembly of the Church of England

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1920

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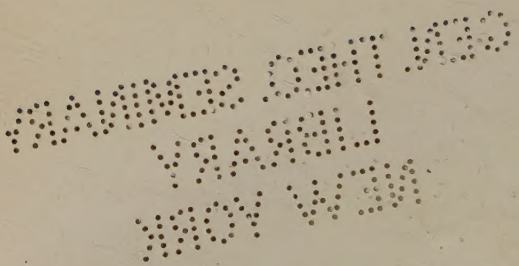

THE APPEAL OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

I.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

Your Grace, our hope is that in all our business in this Assembly, whether constitutional or even financial, we are endeavouring to be loyal to the mind of Christ and to the service of His kingdom. We now reach a point in our agenda where we know what the mind of Christ is and where we come to something that is quite essential for the service of His kingdom. Personally I find it a little difficult, and I think that a good many of the members of the Assembly will share my difficulty, to pass from the subjects which have quite rightly engaged our attention during this week, and particularly this morning, to a matter of such profound and overwhelming importance in comparison with which most of our business, valuable and important as it is, is only moving on the surface of the great stream

of the history of the Church of Christ. Therefore, I will try to make myself, and I will ask the Assembly to make, an inward act of recollection of the Divine Presence and of submission to the guidance of the Divine Spirit.

It would, I think, have been strange if there had been no reference at this first important meeting of the National Assembly to the work of the Lambeth Conference which was concluded in the autumn. Many indeed of its resolutions were in the nature of counsel to the bishops and other members of the Church, and many require the sanction of the constituted authorities of the Anglican Communion before they can become operative in fact; but I think that by universal agreement it is felt that the resolutions which were issued by the Conference on the great subject of the union of the Church of Christ possess a character and an importance of their own. I propose to ask the Assembly this afternoon not indeed to enter upon any discussion of the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference upon the union of the Church, but simply to give its cordial welcome to the Appeal to all Christian People which endeavours to express the spirit of which the Lambeth Conference was conscious and the ideal which rose before its mind.

In doing so I shall not attempt to take up the

time of the Conference by impressing upon it the urgency of the matter. I cannot understand the imagination which at the present time does not realise that unless the Church of Christ is prepared to make some wholly new and more resolute advance in this question of reunion it will manifestly miss the destiny to which the providence of God is calling it at this moment in the history of the world. The Lambeth Conference selected the great principle of fellowship as the one which it felt it was its duty to lay before the Christian world as the ultimate solution of all its problems. Every one agrees that the supreme need of the world at the present time is peace, and peace is not possible anywhere at home or abroad without some further outpouring of the spirit of fellowship. Beyond all question, if the Church of Christ is to reflect the mind and the will of its Lord it must proclaim the truth of fellowship to a distracted and disordered world. But it can hardly do so with honesty, I had almost said decency, unless it is in a wholly new manner and under a wholly new constraint of conscience addressing itself to the task of manifesting fellowship within itself. It belongs not only to the need of the world but to the honour of Christ that the schisms of His body should be healed.

It is difficult for any one who is familiar with the very human sources of this document, the Appeal to all Christian People, which represents the mind and will of the Lambeth Conference, to form a fair judgment upon its value as a contribution to this overwhelming cause or as the opening of a new door of light and hope, and therefore I feel personally some difficulty in asking you, many of whom were not present at the Lambeth Conference, to believe that in this Appeal there is laid upon the Church, and therefore upon the Church of England, a new and most solemn trust. I only venture to say so much because there are two facts about it which I think all men should know and understand.

The first is the unanimity of the bishops out of which it comes. I will not take up your time by reminding you how difficult, humanly speaking, it was to attain practical unanimity on a matter full of the deepest controversies in which the Christian conscience can be engaged, on the part of bishops reflecting every variety of tradition and conviction, and coming from every part of the world. And yet such unanimity was attained. I do not wish to exaggerate that unanimity. I think it is quite possible that individual bishops either here or elsewhere may say that they did not share it,

But I can say, although we are not at liberty to publish figures, that the Appeal was adopted by this multitude of bishops with overwhelming assent. I will go further and I will say that that assent was brought about by an experience which I think no one who was present is likely to forget. Here again I have no wish to exaggerate. It is not fair for men who were conscious of a very special spiritual experience to ask other men who did not share it to take the results of that experience merely on trust. The whole Christian world, and you within it, must try the spirit whether it be of God. But you and the Churches from which you come were praying for the bishops, and the bishops, as I know, under the stress of an almost overwhelming sense of responsibility were praying eagerly for themselves. Beyond the limits of the Anglican Church Christians everywhere were praying that this great opportunity might not be lost. Then it happened that in spite of initial difficulties—and how great they were no one knows better than the Chairman of the Committee appointed to consider the question—there was the sense of the constraint, the compelling power of an influence that was higher and deeper than that of which any one of us individually was conscious. I can only say for myself that I should find it

difficult ever to believe that the prayer for the Holy Spirit is answered unless it was answered there and then.

The second fact to be remembered is the manner in which the Appeal when it was issued was received. It was surprising. Doubts were expressed; criticisms indicated or reserved. But everywhere the Appeal was recognised as marking a new stage in the long history of the hopes of Reunion. I give only two illustrations. The Appeal was described by Dr. Scott Lidgett as "an epoch-making act; the greatest ecclesiastical event," in his judgment, "since the Reformation"; and by a thoughtful Roman Catholic writer as "the most authentic promise of the dawn [of Reunion] that has yet appeared in the dark night legacied to us by the sixteenth century."

If this be so, is there not here in this Appeal some purpose of God both for the Anglican Church and for the Christian world? We may not understand it, and I am not sure that I wholly understand it myself. We may not be able to foresee where it will lead us. We may through our blindness or negligence, or through some disastrous falling back into old controversies, miscarry it; but I am sure that a purpose of God has been revealed in it. If so, it is a purpose in which the whole Church of Christ must co-

operate. The bishops lay this Appeal first of all before themselves, but also before all Christian people. It is no mere statement of the bishops. It is an invitation to every Christian man and woman who longs to realise the fellowship of the Christian Church to unite in a common endeavour whereby whatever purpose of God lies in the Appeal may be seen, followed, and fulfilled. Not unnaturally, therefore, the bishops who have offered this Appeal would desire at the outset to be sure that it finds welcome at least in the National Assembly of the Church of England.

How was this measure of agreement among the bishops reached ? I am leaving aside now that deeper answer to the question of which one speaks both with diffidence and reverence. I think that the answer is twofold. And first (I mention this because I ask the whole Assembly to join with the bishops in this matter), the bishops felt that we have reached a point in which acquiescence in the existing situation is no longer tolerable on the part of any disciple of Jesus Christ. Platitudes, pious desires, are now almost an offence. The old lines of controversy pursued for centuries by historians, scholars, theologians, and ecclesiastics have proved to be culs-de-sac, and no advance along them is possible. What we have

all to recognise is that we can no longer acquiesce in the indulgence of mere aspirations, or in the acceptance of a controversial *impasse*. There must be resources in the Church of God, if it is the body of His Spirit, which can open afresh the minds and eyes of men and let them see some new way by which the unity of the Church of Christ can be restored.

The second thought which operated in the minds of the bishops was that possibly one of the reasons of difficulty and confusion in the past has been that we have not yet seriously thought out the ideal which we set before ourselves of the Church's unity. I am sure that in the earlier stage of resolutions passed at all kinds of conferences there was manifest confusion as to the ideal which we are after. It is impossible for any one to understand the Lambeth Appeal, or the hope, if it be a hope, which it opens out, unless he has understood and seen and agreed with the ideal which rose before the minds of the bishops as they thought and prayed.

It is open to us to consider and it is open to the whole Church to consider whether possibly we may not in many ways have been moving along wrong lines, whether, after all, the circumstances of Christian history as they have disclosed themselves during these centuries do not indicate that

it is not the mind of the Master that there should be any visible organic unity of His Church at all. It is open to us seriously and deliberately to ask ourselves whether we are not being pointed to a new conception of unity altogether which will be achieved by common discipleship of Jesus Christ as the Master of human life and the only Teacher of the solution of its mysteries. It may be that the only visible unity which He desires is the cordial and manifested brotherhood of all these disciples one with another. It may be that we are being asked to see that the utmost that He can desire is that all groups of His disciples organised as they please should recognise one another as brethren, and manifest that recognition by common preaching in one another's pulpits and the common receiving of grace at one another's Communion Tables. I take leave to say that it is a very attractive ideal. It would solve many difficulties and bring us at once into a fuller realisation of that instinctive and deep brotherhood in Christ of which all who are called by His name must be conscious. The bishops I think did face the attractiveness of that ideal, and they passed it by. They felt, I think, that you could not reconcile it with the spirit and language of the New Testament, that if that were the mind of Christ you could not understand how

Christianity comes down to us as a living thing at all, or even how in the days to come, if that be all, Christianity can be preserved as anything more than a vague sentiment. Therefore, we were constrained to think that it was not wrong but right to believe that it is God's purpose to manifest the fellowship that is in His Son "as far as this world is concerned in an outward visible and united society, holding one faith, having its own recognised officers, using God-given means of grace, and inspiring all its members to the worldwide service of the kingdom of God."

If the ideal of a unity purely spiritual in spite of all its attractiveness is to be set aside and we are to set our minds as Christian men and women towards a visible and organic unity of the Church, here again we must be sure of our ideal. There is on the one hand challenging us all by its impressiveness and consistency the ideal of a uniformity by way of submission, and akin to that the ideal of unity secured through the absorption of one body in another. I will only say with regard to the latter that if any one thinks that this Appeal constitutes some proposals by the Anglican Church for terms of union by the absorption into itself of other Christian communions, he has entirely misread and misunderstood its scope and

purpose. With regard to the former, the ideal of uniformity by submission, we have only, I think, to register our unalterable conviction that that is an ideal which is both impossible of fulfilment and imperfect in itself.

There remains the ideal not of uniformity by way of submission or of absorption, but of unity by way of inclusion, a unity that is not mechanical but organic, that is to say, a unity in which there is independent and characteristic life fulfilled by the various parts, and yet in which all parts work together and contribute to the full and rich life of the whole body. Within this unity there would be place for the great Latin Church, reformed we hope in many respects, yet retaining many of the special characteristics which have obtained and held the assent of multitudes of Christian people; for the great Churches of the East; for the Anglican Church; for the great Protestant communities which history proves to have been called for some special purpose by the Spirit of God; and, beyond and behind these, for new Churches rising up offering to the whole body the national treasures of China, of Africa, and of India. The ideal which the bishops have put before themselves is the ideal of an organic unity in which the different groups will retain much that has been characteristic of their own history

and development, but yet will be so united by certain fundamental ties with one another that they may without doubtfulness of mind and with a true sense of brotherhood hold communion with one another. It is for the Assembly, it is for all companies of Christian people, to decide whether or not this is the ideal which we shall seek. That is the way which the Lambeth Appeal opens out, not to the Anglican Church only, but, we would humbly believe, to the whole Church of Christ, and we ask that this Assembly should give a welcome to that way.

I ought not to detain the Assembly very long in the midst of its manifold business, though God knows this question is important enough. I will assume that the Assembly is familiar with the words of the Appeal, and yet I notice that many even of those who may be expected to have read and to know it have scarcely realised that it is one whole. I notice both among our own people and among many of our fellow Christians that people are apt to fasten upon particular paragraphs, passages, or phrases and to focus their criticism or questioning upon them and not to see them in the context of the whole Appeal. Therefore will you suffer me in as few words as I can use to remind you of the unity of thought that lies behind this document?

It begins with emphasising two truths which lie behind the whole of it and without which it cannot be understood or explained. One is that there is and can be only one Church of Christ. "The Churches" is an inevitable and convenient phrase, but if it is pressed too far it leads us out of the way. There is only one Church, for there is and can be only one body of Christ. Is there any existing group, Eastern, Western, Anglican, Protestant, that can claim so manifest a monopoly of the marks of the body of Christ as to exclude any person baptised within that body from its membership? It is impossible, and therefore the bishops no longer come to their fellow Christians of, let us say, non-episcopal communions as if they were anxious to bring them into their brotherhood. They come to them and say, "Sirs, we *are* brethren; therefore let us unite more perfectly to manifest our fellowship in the Church." The other underlying truth is that the unity of the Church has not to be created. It exists, for it is in Christ and it has only to be made visible. What the Appeal asks is not that we should set about to consider how we are to create a thing so mysterious and majestic as the unity of the Church of Christ, but that we should believe that it is there, that it is God's will, and that He asks

us to make it visible in the world. On that basis the Appeal proceeds.

We make the confession that this unity is manifestly not visible in the world to-day. We are withholding from the world the witness of a united fellowship, we are withholding from Christ the fulness of a united body, and the reason is our manifold ignorance, self-will, ambition, and blindness to the sin of disunion. Other causes besides these no doubt have co-operated, but at the root of all there lies the spirit of schism, and we confess our share in that spirit. We believe that the time has long passed when any group of Christians can bandy epithets of schism with any other. Whether it be Rome or Greece or Anglicanism or Protestantism, we are all in our varying degrees responsible for the state of schism which has broken the unity of the body of Christ ; we have all to make our common confession of sin. If that be so, we ask our fellow Christians to join with us in the recognition and confession of this truth. And here I would say that we shall get no further along the road which the Lambeth Appeal seems to open out, either we or any other Christian group, if we have any spirit of self-satisfaction. May I be forgiven if I say that I seem to notice in some of the criticisms by other communions of

the Appeal this note : " We are entirely satisfied with ourselves. We only ask that all other Christian Churches should be equally satisfied with us." There is no hope along that line. It is an attitude which the Church of England may have frequently taken, but the Lambeth Appeal asks the Church to abandon it and to enter a more fruitful path, saying that we are not satisfied with ourselves, not only because we know our own faults, but mainly because we see in other groups of Christians gifts and graces and aspects of truth which we desire to share within our own Church, recognising that without them our Christian life cannot be complete.

So it is that we ask the Christian world to look beyond the things of the past with new hope to the future, and we lay before the Christian world the vision which rose before our minds of " a Church genuinely Catholic, loyal to all truth, and gathering into its fellowship all who profess and call themselves Christians, within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present shall be possessed in common and made serviceable to the whole body of Christ. Within this unity Christian communions now separated from one another would retain much that has long been distinctive

in their methods of worship and service. It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled."

Now, if that ideal can be attained, there must of course be an element of identity in this rich and inclusive society which gives it its own place and character among the associations of men, and in history. Wherein do we find that basis of identity, that essential element of organic unity? We say that there must be a common faith. If the life of the one body is in Christ, we must know who this Christ is in whom we live, God and man, and we say that there is no confession of that faith that is comparable in its authority to the great Creed of Christendom, the Nicene Creed. There must be the Sacraments by which Christ has been pleased to ordain that life in Him should be given, sustained, and expressed. And we say that if there is to be a ministry of the Word and of the Sacraments which is everywhere received and acknowledged, it must be a common ministry in the sense that every one of the different groups will gladly recognise its authority. Our ideal is not that we should go further in tests of intercommunion, but if there be this element of identity and unity, it will give character and spirit to the whole body; and within it there

can be included the richest variety of expressions of truth and worship and experience.

We then ask, How is this common ministry to be secured ? and we urge the answer that it must be through episcopal ordination. We know that that brings us to the crux of the whole matter, and here I would ask you, the members of this representative Assembly, when, as I hope you will, you carry this Appeal into your own parishes and into your own Church life, to put the matter in three ways in your manifold opportunities of converse with those who do not share at present with you an episcopal ministry. First, given that the ideal is accepted, let us ask the question whether in point of fact there is any other way by which this common ministry can be achieved. It is of no use asking the question if men have not accepted the ideal, but if they have, then let us ask whether there is any other way by which it can be fulfilled. Next, we do not come forward in a spirit of privilege and superiority, but we come forward saying, " Here is a gift which by the providence of God has been preserved in these historic churches as a trust for the fulfilment of the unity of His body. You have other gifts. We long for them and desire them. Will you accept this gift at the hands of those who are able to give it ? " The third point that I would

ask you to put forward is that we are passing no negative judgment upon existing ministries. We say: "It is not that we call in question for a moment the spiritual reality of the ministries of those communions which do not possess the Episcopate. On the contrary, we thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace." What we ask is not that we should judge one another by the past, but that, forgetting the past, we should look forward to the future and to sharing together one ministry through which, without any doubtfulness of mind, everywhere in the great family of God there can be offered at last one eucharist of fellowship, joy, and praise.

We think that it is worth while to make some sacrifice for so great an end, and therefore we go further and we say that in this matter we want to make it as clear as we can that we are asking for no repudiation of ministries which have already been enjoyed and fulfilled. We make what to some may be perhaps the difficult and to others the apparently superfluous suggestion that we who send forth this Appeal are persuaded that "if the authorities of other communions should so desire, terms of union having been otherwise satisfactorily ad-

justed, the bishops and clergy of our communion would willingly accept from these authorities a form of commission or recognition which would commend our ministry to their congregations as having its place in the one family life." We do not ask men to defer to our conscience without showing that we are willing, if it is desired, to make the same deference to theirs. We do not know whether it will be desired, it is not for us to say, but we make the offer in all sincerity because we think that during the period of transition before the achievement of the one ministry it will make it clearer to our brethren that we are asking for no repudiation; for how could any of us repudiate the Orders we have received? We are making it plain that our one desire is that we may by mutual deference to one another help forward the spirit by which a fuller union can be achieved. Therefore it is that we make this proposal, and we leave it to other communions to decide whether or not they wish to avail themselves of it. In conversations with the ministers of other religious communions they may say, "Do you mean that there is any grace to be given by episcopal ordination which we have not yet received?" I am content for myself to say, "My brother, we recognise the sacrifice that you must make, but if you are willing to be ordained to a new common

ministry in the Church of Christ, can you doubt but that there will be given to you some special grace and strength from the Holy Spirit ? "

Having indicated how we think we can proceed together to the fulfilment of the ideal, we lay it before the Christian world, and first of all before ourselves and our own people, as I am endeavouring, I hope not at excessive length, to do to-day. We do not ask other Christian communions to begin to consider with us how they are to become Anglicans—God forbid—but rather that all together we should " unite in a new and great endeavour to recover and to manifest to the world the unity of the body of Christ for which He prayed." That is the road which we ask our fellow Churchmen and our fellow Christians to travel with us. We are standing at the cross-roads, and we all feel that we cannot stand still. We all feel that we cannot go along the road that leads to submission or absorption. We all feel, I think, increasingly that we cannot go along a road which, even with the attractiveness of a spiritual unity, leads to the ever continued separation from one another of men and women who ought to be united in the one body. There remains this road of an organic and visible unity within which we shall all fulfil

our own several types of Christian life and experience.

Lastly, let me turn to the second part of my motion, which is that this Assembly will give to those on whom the responsibility rests every encouragement in carrying out the resolution of the Conference which follows the Appeal, namely, that "the Conference recommends to the authorities of the Churches of the Anglican Communion that they should in such ways and at such times as they think best formally invite the authorities of other Churches within their areas to confer with them concerning the possibility of taking definite steps to co-operate in a common endeavour on the lines set forth in the above Appeal to restore the unity of the Church of Christ." We do not ask this Assembly to authorise terms or conditions of union with any Christian body. That is not our purpose. We are only endeavouring to arrange Conferences by which we can see whether, as co-partners in a common wish and common ideal, we can make some further move together in the direction of Christian unity. I cannot believe that any member of the Assembly would withhold encouragement from us. In this country it is very largely the two Archbishops upon whom rests the responsible task of initiating

Conferences, and we have already begun to consult others as to how they can best be promoted. They will, I hope, be supported by numbers of unofficial and private Conferences throughout the whole country. Meanwhile we recognise the immense difficulty of the task. If, my brothers and sisters, you press me to say whether I can envisage the fulfilment of this ideal in the actual circumstances of English life to-day, my answer is that I cannot ; but I believe that if we are right in setting out along this road, we shall have the strength and help and guidance to carry us over difficulties that at present seem insuperable. Therefore it is that we ask that in entering upon these Conferences we may at least have the sympathy and the good-will of the National Assembly of the Church of England.

I ask your forgiveness for having kept you for so long. I am naturally full of the subject, and so I hope will the whole Church be, and every member of this Assembly. We shall all feel that we have now reached a stage at which we have something more to do than offer accustomed prayers and exchange accustomed aspirations. In the circumstances of the world, in the issue of this Appeal, to every Christian man and woman a bond unknown is given that he "should be, else sinning greatly, a dedicated

spirit." I move "That the Assembly welcomes the 'Appeal to all Christian People' issued by the bishops assembled in the Lambeth Conference, and earnestly hopes that preliminary steps may be taken as soon as possible to initiate Conferences on the proposals therein set forth."

II

The Archbishop of Canterbury

We have spoken this week on very grave and very practical subjects affecting, directly or indirectly, our whole Church life ; but nothing of course is comparable in importance with the matter which is suggested by the resolution of the Archbishop of York. The hour at which we stand is the most solemn and I think is among the most hopeful of any that the Church has known for centuries. There is a splendid trust given to the men and women, and above all to the office-bearers of the Church—and God grant that they may be worthy of it—who are, under God, the men and women on whom responsibility rests at this tremendous hour. The Dean of Durham has said that if the opportunity for going forward be lost it will not recur. Please God it will not be lost. It is our resolve, God helping us, that it shall not be, and those of us to whom the task belongs

of beginning what we may call the operative work of Reunion have set our hands firmly to it. Let us remember that, while the position is extraordinarily grave and momentous in its consequences, it is also extraordinarily delicate. Rash words might do untold ill, and, above all, rash words or rash acts on the part of those to whom central or large responsibility is given. I ask you all at this time when you say your prayers to remember those of us who stand at the centre, and on whose word and action or on whose silence and inaction great things may turn, that we may be guided aright at an hour of quite extraordinary difficulty as well as magnificent opportunity. I thankfully recognise that my brother of Durham, who spoke to us to-day with characteristic frankness and straightforwardness as to what he thought, supports the Appeal, and is not going to vote against the resolution, although he has the reservations to which he gave expression. The Bishop of Durham always speaks as a pre-eminently honest man, and when, as to-day, he desires a different policy or thinks that perhaps he will follow a rather different course from others, he is always straightforward in saying so. I own that sometimes my brother's action a little puzzles me because he so constantly feels it

obligatory on his conscience to tell us wherein lay the reservations in his mind when he adopted or followed or acquiesced in a resolution of some assembly of which he was a member. It may be necessary to tell us about it, but if so, some of us have strangely failed in our duty many and many a time. I say with all sincerity, after a long record of membership of Church assemblies, that one has constantly felt it to be right, and, I think, natural and simple, when some resolution was passed or action taken which one did not wish to oppose but about which one was doubtful in this direction or in that, to keep silence rather than bring out the reservations in one's mind, reservations which are apt, when thus formally given to the world, to shape themselves into opposition to a resolution which one does not oppose and to which acquiescence might have been given *sub silentio*.

The Bishop of Durham was speaking about a different kind of action which in his judgment might be taken at this moment. As I think of the intense solemnity of the trust laid upon us to use this opportunity aright, I feel that in using it we must do so as members or parts of an organic system with an organic life. Our Church possesses deliberate and fully defined means of action, provincial, diocesan, parochial, and all

the rest, established by constitutional authority. The Lambeth Conference has no administrative responsibility whatever. The Lambeth Conference is a gathering of the administrative officers who hold chief place throughout our Church all over the round world, who come together to give advice to one another, and through the Conference to the world, as to the lines on which or within which they think the organic life of the Church can be properly and loyally exercised. An utterance of the Conference, weighty as it must necessarily be, makes no difference as to the obligations and the rules of the organic life until such time as the advice of the Conference is taken or rejected by this or that Province or other part of the Church. I am constantly trying to remind those who are eager in this matter that the Lambeth Conference has not taken away constitutional restrictions which existed before, or imposed obligations or rules, or whatever you like to call them, which did not exist before. It has made a great Appeal which has laid down large principles of thought, and it is for the body itself in its organic parts to move with deliberation and thought and care on lines which the Lambeth Conference tells us it regards as being rightly within the purview of our action and the ambit within which we may move. That

is the position in which we stand at this moment. Until our body or some part of it acts organically I regard every obligation which existed before the Lambeth Conference met as existing quite as clearly to-day. Having said that, can any of us doubt, after what the Lambeth Conference has told us is the mind of the Episcopate of our Church throughout the world, that we have received a mighty impetus and stimulus for going forward on the lines indicated in this great Appeal ? Let no one imagine that even now things have been allowed to tarry. The Dean of Durham rightly and wisely reminded us of the need of going forward without delay, and let me tell you that I began to go forward within five days of the close of the Conference. I am in the thick of the work now, and I hope that ere long we shall have, finding their way into the various Christian churches throughout England, the results of communications which are passing, and which will pass in the next few weeks yet more thickly than before, between those of us on whom special responsibility rests. But we must beware of short cuts. It is absolutely certain that if we are to do this thing effectively we must go forward step by step with the utmost caution. We must remember all the conditions and safeguards which were carefully laid down in connection

with the steps to be taken in acting upon that great Appeal. We cannot scramble through the proceedings anyhow, nor can we hope by omitting anything to find a short cut which will be effective in reaching the goal. We must not imagine that we can reach a conclusion in that way. It will only be by the greatest care in seeing that we are not missing anything that we ought not to miss that we can safely proceed. We must test each weak place and deal with each difficulty as we go forward, and only by guarding ourselves in that way can we go forward effectively. I do desire that, as the Dean of Durham said, not one day shall be lost in the endeavour that we make to take advantage of the opportunity which God has given to us in connection with this great Appeal. We want to move while men's hearts, minds, and ears are open, and while they are inspired with a desire to realise the unity for which we so earnestly hope. I said two or three days ago, and it applies specially to what we are considering now, that it is not a small thing that we should be meeting here at this particular moment. I hope that we shall be undivided in our resolve to go forward. The mind and heart of the whole nation have been stirred by deep things in these last few days, by sacred memories, by well-defined Christian hope, and by a sense

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of the greatness of the trust that belongs to us as a Christian people. I believe that our opportunity is incalculably great if we use it aright. If we use it carelessly our responsibility will be grave beyond words.

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